

Executive Registry

74-6605/19

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You raise a very fundamental question in your letter of September 28th, and one which could take a volume to answer. I believe, however, the basic answer is that contained in the President's press conference of 16 September 1974, in which he said "It's a recognized fact that historically, as well as presently, such actions are taken in the best interests of the countries involved." In a world of sovereign powers, we Americans must be informed of the potential difficulties which we could face from other nations, as some can present potential threats, and we must protect ourselves against that danger. As for our covert operations, these also fundamentally rest on our nation's sovereign rights, and I believe recent votes in the Congress indicate that the Congress also believes that the U. S. should not be inhibited from conducting such activities where necessary.

I hope this answers your questions.

Sincerely,

/s/ W. E. Colby

W. E. Colby
Director

WEC:jlp (1 Nov 1974)

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September 28, 1974

Mr. William E. Colby
Director of Central Intelligence Agency
Central Intelligence Agency
Langley, Virginia 22101

Dear Mr. Colby,

I would like to commend you on an excellent presentation and response to the questions asked at the Congressional hearing. With the events of recent weeks we have seen a great deal of publicity on the C.I.A., its operations, and alleged involvement in Chile.

Being a part-time employee with the Agency and full-time foreign service student at Georgetown University I have a concern for the C.I.A. and its activities in other countries. In various courses, from theology to political courses, the C.I.A. has been mentioned in connection with Chile. In one political course my professor mentioned involvement of the C.I.A. in Chile as having an "erosive" effect upon our American culture and our concept of its ideals.

Of course, clandestine activities and covert operations abroad cannot be admitted politically. But in a very general sense, I would like to know what justification or rationale we as Americans have for getting ourselves involved overseas. An answer to this would certainly provide me with a base from which to view our actions abroad.

Your reply would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Address]

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